

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Date: 6/14/2013

GAIN Report Number: JA3021

Japan

Post: Tokyo

The WASABI - Hot News from Japan Vol. 9 Issue 7

Report Categories:

Agricultural Situation

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Report Highlights:

Agricultural Minister-Counselor Visits Japan's Cherry Growing Center; FAS Tokyo Meets with AgriFuture Japan; Scientist tells the story of Hawaiian biotech papaya to the general public in Osaka.

General Information:

The Wasabi

HOT News from Japan - Vol 9, Issue 7
June 14, 2013

Agricultural Minister-Counselor Visits Japan's Cherry Growing Center: On May 22, 2013, U.S. Embassy Tokyo's Agricultural Minister-Counselor David Miller visited Yamagata Prefecture to study this year's cherry growing conditions and market situation. During the one day visit, Mr. Miller met with local JA officials and exchanged views on agriculture, including the potential for exporting Japanese farm products to overseas markets. He also visited a local cherry orchard to learn about Yamagata's cherry growing methods and this year's crop situation. Mr. Miller concluded the visit with a tour of the prefecture's Horticultural Experiment Station where research on the breeding of fruits, such as cherries, grapes, and apples, is carried out. Yamagata Prefecture is Japan's major cherry production area, accounting for about 76 percent of the nation's total cherry output (see [GAIN Report JA2020](#)). Japanese cherry production last year was 17,800 MT; Japan's imports of U.S. cherries topped 10,414 MT valued at \$95 million for the 2012 season.



FAS Tokyo Meets with AgriFuture Japan: On June 6, 2013, the Agricultural Affairs Office in the U.S. Embassy Tokyo (aka FAS Tokyo) visited AgriFuture Japan, an association who operates a professional school for young farmers. During the visit, parties exchanged views on agricultural education and explored areas of possible collaboration. The professional school, the Japan Institute of Agricultural Management (JIAM), opened last April. JIAM offers a two-year program to students who are interested in agribusiness and becoming leaders in the agricultural sector. The establishment of JIAM comes at a time where agricultural education in Japan is looking to build the next generation of farmers by focusing on management and leadership skills in addition to technical know-how. The parties agreed to work together to increase interactions between American and Japanese agricultural students.

Scientist tells a story of Hawaiian biotech papaya to the general public in Osaka: In commemoration of the Fascination of Plants Day on May 18, 2013, Osaka Prefecture University's Graduate School of Life and Environmental Sciences held a seminar for the general public on vegetable-growing factories and biotechnology. During the half-day program, organized by Dr. Nozomu Koizumi, a molecular biologist and professor at the Graduate School, local participants of varying ages learned the

importance of agricultural biotechnology and saw a FAS Tokyo-produced video that explained how a biotech variety of Hawaiian papaya “Rainbow” was developed in Hawaii. At the end of the program, the participants had a chance to sample fresh “Rainbow” papayas. The reaction was positive with many saying “oishii” or delicious.

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